



Great Water Conversations

March 3, 2020

at the

Montana Water Summit

12 – 1:30p.m. (during lunch)

Helena Colonial Hotel

Call for Abstracts - open through December 20, 2019

Great Water Conversations – Casual, participatory, discussion-based breakout sessions – over lunch!

Are you looking to share your latest water-related project, initiative, or musing at the Montana Water Summit? This special topic lunch is the perfect opportunity to engage in specific conversation with other conference attendees.

We're looking for upward of 30 subject matter experts to host conversation tables at lunch on Tuesday, March 3. As a table host, you'll loosely guide an hour-long conversation with the 6-8 people at your table based on your water-related expertise.

Submit an abstract to host a table

If you'd like to host a table, please [submit an abstract here](#) by **December 20, 2019**. Table hosts will be notified by January 6th if their proposal is accepted.

Summit attendees will choose a table from a variety of stellar topics and hosts when they register, so be sure to make a creative sales pitch! *Space is limited. The steering committee will select top proposals to ensure compelling, varied topics.*

Table host responsibilities

Engaging and knowledgeable table hosts are critical to the activity's success. The host will engage with conference attendees on a pre-determined, water-related conversation topic stemming from his or her expertise and interests.

The table host's role is to engage people by recounting new information, posing interesting questions, and offering insight that aligns with his or her expertise in research, theory, or practice. The conversations should maintain a participatory, free-flowing rather than facilitated feel – think “dinner party with friends” vs. lecture.

Table hosts will be asked to:

- Submit a conversation title and short, engaging abstract (examples below) pitching a proposed conversation topic.
- Arrive to their pre-determined (and labeled) lunch table a bit early on Tuesday, March 3.
- Prepare a few discussion points, interesting facts, or other prompts to launch the conversation.
- Begin with introductions and loosely guide conversations around the topic.
- Converse sans visual aids or laptops.
- Keep it light and have fun!

Conversation topics

Topics should relate to water in some way. Topics can range from detailed to philosophical to light and fun. Table hosts might discuss their latest research or management initiatives or encourage participants to recount their most harrowing river running stories.

Please reach out to Nikki Sandve, nsandve2@mt.gov, 406-556-4505 or Sara Meloy, 406-444-4247, smeloy@mt.gov for more information.

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Check out the abstract examples below or [the full list of topics](#) from the 2018 Montana Water Summit:**Rediscover natural water storage for fun and profit – Amy Chadwick, Great West Engineering**

Got water? Great! How about 20 years from now? Are you taking advantage of the ample inexpensive opportunities to keep water around for more of the year? If you are interested in learning or sharing knowledge about the state of our source waters, how to keep water on your land, and what we can do to keep our streams flowing, join Amy Chadwick, Stream and Wetland Ecologist at Great West Engineering for a discussion about trends in headwaters and water supply, restoration techniques, permitting hurdles, and management approaches for improving natural water storage.

Fish or Farmers? Who wins when water's scarce? – Leon Szeptycki, Water in the West Program – Stanford University and Laura Ziemer, Trout Unlimited

In times of water scarcity, tension rises over competing demands for water. The worst outcomes happen when a lack of water creates a zero-sum game of winners and losers. The silver lining to increasing water demand in the West--coupled with increasing periods of drought and low-snowpack years--is that more people are thinking more creatively about getting out of the zero-sum scenario. Innovative strategies, infrastructure improvements, and better use of better data are all creating more resilient water supplies for farmers, fish, and people. Leon and Laura will describe some of the Best of the West examples, where opposing interests have come together to find solutions to water scarcity. Our conversation at this table will be about how some of these efforts in other parts of the West could inspire Montana-grown solutions.

Worldly Water – Sunni Heikes-Knapton, Madison Conservation District

The discussion will include observations made by an American about the recreational, economic, and cultural relationship of the Nordic people with their water resources. Participants are encouraged to reflect on comparisons to other parts of the globe where they have observed the different forms of these relationships, and what can be learned from other nations. No lutefisk will be served at this table.